

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 1, 2019

The Honorable Marcy Kaptur
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Energy and Water
Development and Related Agencies
2362-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Simpson
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Energy and Water
Development and Related Agencies
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20151

Dear Chairwoman Kaptur and Ranking Member Simpson:

As you begin work on the Fiscal Year 2020 Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, we strongly urge you to provide the highest possible funding levels for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to work on Everglades restoration, and \$200M in the USACE Construction account for Additional Funding for Environmental Restoration or Compliance where SFER could compete for additional funding. Adequately funding these programs and projects will continue the recent momentum we have seen in achieving the decades long goal of Everglades restoration.

The Everglades is the drinking water source for one in three Floridians and a source of jobs and economic livelihood for hundreds of thousands more. Restoring America's Everglades is not a choice between fiscal responsibility and environmental protection. In fact, it is both. Restoration encompasses exactly the kind of "shovel-ready" infrastructure projects that will help our economy. The chance to preserve this national treasure while putting in place the tools for long-term economic prosperity is an opportunity we cannot let slip by.

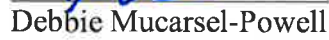
With the recent passage of the *Water Resources and Development Act (WRDA)* of 2018, legislation passed to specifically address the country's water resource needs, funding for these projects could not come at a more critical time. Notably for Florida, WRDA authorized the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) Reservoir, a key component of the restoration of the Everglades ecosystem. With the authorization of EAA, along with the continued work on the overarching Central Everglades Restoration Project (CERP) which was authorized back in 2000, adequate funding and authorizations for new projects are needed to continue to build on this momentum.


There is little question that restoration of America's Everglades is necessary. The bridges and canals built decades ago to "tame" the River of Grass threaten a treasured ecosystem that impacts our way of life. Billions of gallons of water that help prevent salt water impingement are needed for the Everglades National Park, but instead are washed into the sea through discharges from Lake Okeechobee and an elaborate canal system that severely damages fragile coastal estuaries. This polluted water strains our fishing and tourism businesses, as well as poses a danger to public health.

As you know, this year's funding request is part of a multi-year effort to provide the necessary resources to preserve one of the great ecological treasures in our nation and to specifically move forward on construction projects that will help alleviate decades old flawed engineering. We have a responsibility to preserve this unique gift for future generations. Thank you for your time and consideration of our request.


Sincerely,


Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress


Debbie Mucarsel-Powell
Member of Congress


Francis Rooney
Member of Congress


Brian Mast
Member of Congress


Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress


Bill Posey
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Al Lawson
Member of Congress


Darren Soto
Member of Congress


Ted Deutch
Member of Congress


Val Demings
Member of Congress


Kathy Castor
Member of Congress

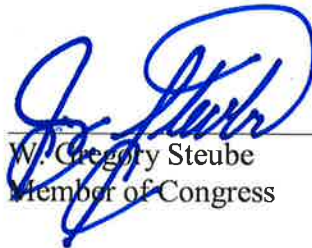

Donna Shalala
Member of Congress

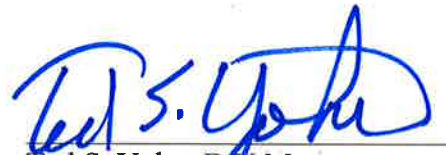

Stephanie Murphy
Member of Congress



Lois Frankel
Member of Congress


Michael Waltz
Member of Congress


Charlie Crist
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W. Gregory Steube
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Ted S. Yoho; D.V.M.
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Member of Congress


Matt Gaetz
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